

Public versus Private Secondary Schools: A Qualitative Comparison

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I. INTRODUCTION

This is a comprehensive study to compare the performance, achievements and effectiveness of government versus private primary schools in rural area of Behman Diwana, Bathinda,. Different measures, focusing on overall performance were taken for this comparison. To check the performance of both public and private schools, a survey was conducted through questionnaires for four stakeholders, Head Master, Teachers, Parents and Students. The predominant findings show that Private schools perform better than public schools in maximum measures of performance except a few which have been taken in this study, but both public and private schools in Behman Diwana face a number challenges. Both sectors still deprive of quality of human and material resources for the provision of standard education.

Education is a key in human capital formation. Quality of human resources depends upon the quality of education of a country. Sustainable economic development needs skilled manpower which is raised through productivity and efficiency of individuals that is only possible through education. Illiteracy is a main barrier to economic development. Secondary education is perceived as one of the main vehicle for promoting economic growth and improving living standards in developing countries. But it is probable when secondary education is involved with new knowledge and the appropriate technical training at secondary level to improve the quality of education. Expanding access to secondary schooling is a widely accepted priority in the fight against poverty. It is that stage of compulsory education, which establishes the academic foundation of students and regarded as a fundamental right of all human beings. secondary education is highly correlated with institutions and the institutions are categorized into public and private schools. The world has become more and more competitive now. The whole education system of the world rotates around academic achievements of the students. Parents desire for high level of achievements of their children in education. These desires put a pressure on both public and private schools and make them competitive. The question is which sector is more effective and efficient in this competition, how and where?

II. PUBLIC VS PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS –WHICH ONE IS PERFORMING BETTER

Comparative study of public versus private schools and their effectiveness has been the topic of a large number of studies. Several studies have been conducted in all over the world to compare the various features of public and private schools. The researchers tried to make the sense of superiority of either by focusing on different measures of performance. Overall performance of private schools in the world for provision of education outshines in the majority of cases.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

A large share of all school going children is absorbed by Private schools at secondary level in Behman Diwana rural area. Trend to send the children in private schools is increasing steadily even poorest parents want to send their children to private schools. What facts on the ground, why parent prefer private schooling, whether there is a gap in performance of public and private schools, this study have been conducted to compare the public versus private schools by taking maximum measures of performance. Main purpose of this study is to compare the performance of public and private schools by taking, head teachers and teachers job satisfaction, cooperation of higher authorities, school administration and management, availability of physical facilities, maintenance of school record, vision of teachers for good teaching, assignment of homework, planning of co- curricular activities, performance of students, parents and students satisfactions as measures of performance.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To investigate about the functioning of schools as social institutions and comparing the public and private secondary schools, it was necessary to know the views of headmasters, teachers, students and parents relating to each case. So interview was selected as tool of data collection. The present study included case study approach to study and probe two types of schools. A case study is the in depth investigation of a "unit" e.g. individual, groups institution,

organization, program documents, and so forth. In education, a unit is likely to be a school, college, department, institute, an administrator, a teacher or a student. The case study, in its simplest form, involves an investigator, who makes a details examination of a single subjects or groups or phenomenon. In fact, a case study requires the collection of very extensive data in order to produce an in depth understanding of the entity being studied.

Researcher prepared separate questions for interview of headmasters, teachers, students and parents. The heads were asked about their qualification, teaching and management experience, length of service, planning of daily activities and policies to run the school. The questions about school management, instructions, leadership, superiority of each type of school, prediction about the future of public and private schools, role of department in functioning of schools, etc. were also included in the questionnaire.

Teachers were asked about academic and professional qualification, class size, area of subjects, lesson planning, and home work routines teachers' perceptions about good qualities of their schools, weaknesses, principal's leadership style, different between public and private schools.

Students were asked about parents' qualification, number of students in class and teachers for class, teaching learning environment, usage of AV aids by teachers, physical facilities, science lab, science practical home work, conduction of examinations, marking papers and communication of results to parents and headmasters, inspection routines, extra coaching, co-curricular activities and weaknesses. These all questions aimed to determine the functioning (good or bad) of school and to analyze about the provision of facilities.

Parents were questioned about the perceptions regarding the effective functioning school. It included the questions about teaching-learning environment, students' performance in class. Home work policy, provision of physical facilities to students, conduct of examination, communication of results, school management, and teachers' dealing with students and parents, cleanliness and maintenance of school discipline etc.

The total 25 interviews were recorded from six schools. Questionnaires of interview schedule were also filled by the respondents.

The interviews of respondents of each case study were transcribed as follows:

- The answers of each principal were transcribed as a single case.
- The answers of five teachers, students and parents were transcribed and changed into averages for each case. The opponent opinions of respondents were also highlighted.
- Finally the results/responses of all public and private cases were compiled

V. OPINION OF PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public school principals teach arts or science subject when they get time and provide instructional guidance to teachers through personal experience. They plan their daily activities, and make school policies after seeking the suggestions from students, parents and particularly teachers. One head told that not fully but to a certain extent. They encourage their teachers to enhance their professional qualification. They pointed out that lack of financial resources is the main problem. Public school have edge on private school as public school having highly qualified staff, standard building and playground as compared to private schools. Moreover, in public schools syllabus is prepared according to the ideology of Punjab while private school do not follow this policy strictly. The two heads of schools pointed out that department makes policies for the schools of the province and wants compliance from school heads, so their role is restricted and they have to work accordingly. Heads are not given much autonomy especially in financial matters. About the future of schools, one principal replied that private schools have bright future as Government want to increase the role of private sector. However when heads were asked to join private schools all heads rejected this idea.

VI. OPINION OF PRINCIPALS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Principals of private schools teach some subject whenever they get time, All of them plan the activities of their school regularly. Two of them told that they provide instructional guidance to their staff. Every newly inducted teacher is assigned a mentor. All the principals encourage the enhancement of qualification of their staff. They all make their policies after getting feedback from parents, teachers and students when it is required. All the principals provide the facilities of co-curricular activities for the personality development of students. One principal stated in this respect“ the working style of public and private school is different. Teachers of public schools are somehow independent whereas private school teachers are bound to do according to the will of management” While the rest of two principal replied the same that private school have reasonable class size so the teachers can teach their students with ease. Whereas public schools have overcrowded classes which create problems for the teachers. All the principals told that future of

private schools is bright because Government is promoting private sector. All the heads of private schools told that they will join the public school as head if they get a chance.

VII. OPINION OF TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Majority of the teachers of public schools told that they plan lesson on teacher's diary before teaching the class. However, some told that they do not need lesson planning formally because of their experience. They also use A.V.Aids for teaching, they do assign home work to the class but it is not possible to check it daily due to large number of students. But they do it with the help of group leaders. The teachers of two schools told that future of their school is better than other because of having spacious building, library, playground, basket ball court etc. However, teachers of one girls school have different view because of lack of all above mentioned facilities. The teachers pointed out that number of student is increasing day by day but number of teachers is not increasing accordingly. They also told that they show better result in spite of deficient building or other facilities. The teachers also told that public schools are providing social service as compared to private schools while private schools are profit earning and business oriented institutions. Teachers of Government schools told that they have vast and spacious building, public school have qualified staff, teachers can not pay individual attention to the students because of overcrowded classes. All the teachers like the leadership style of their principals.

VIII. OPINION OF TEACHERS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

All the teachers of private schools told that they plan their lesson formally and use A.V.Aids and divide the syllabus on weekly or monthly basis and teach their classes accordingly. Teachers stated that homework is given to the students according to the schedule i.e. twice a week and checked properly. The rest of two schools teachers told that homework is given regularly and checked properly. All the teachers stated deficiencies of their schools that these schools have no play ground, library, science lab small building or residential building (one kanal) shortage of qualified staff and that is why teachers have to teach more periods which effect their performance. No competition of co-curricular activities is held. The teachers of private schools stated the difference of public and private school, they have to work more as compared to public school teachers. They give more individual attention to students because of having reasonable class size as compared to public schools. They also told that selected study is done in private school and short notes are given to students. There is no job security in private schools, pay package is not attractive.

IX. OPINION OF STUDENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

All the students of public schools told that their teachers are hardworking and polite. They use A.V.Aids whenever it is necessary that is why they understand easily what is taught by teachers. There is no need of more explanation of concept. The students of two boys school stated that their schools have science labs and teachers demonstrate practicals regularly while there is no science lab in girls' school which is housed in a rented building. The students described that homework is assigned to them and checked daily. They also told that their principal visit their classes but not more frequently. The students of both the boys' schools told that school provide them facilities of games and co-curricular activities, particularly students of Government School which have a spacious play ground, they have opportunity to take part in many games and sports. However students of Girls school pointed out "our school has no play ground so we cannot take part in games but our teachers arrange literary programs and competition." The students of all schools told that they can see freely the principal when they have a problem.

X. OPINION OF STUDENTS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The students of private schools also replied that they easily understand what they taught by their teachers. The students also told that that their teachers are hardworking and polite and well mannered, they don't miss any class. The students also replied that they understand teacher's lecture but at the same time they have to take help from a coaching centers/ academy for more clarification. The students stated that the school has well equipped science lab. All the students replied that their school provide all the facilities of co-curricular activities for the personality development. Moreover, all the students stated that they can easily approach their principal whenever they needed.

XI. OPINION OF PARENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS

Majority of the parents told that school management is cooperative. Parents indicated that the basic problems of students are, lack of cool drinking water, token system of cycle stand is not good. Some parents indicated that bathrooms are not cleaned properly and library cards and books are not issued to students. Majority of parents told that that behavior of headmaster is often cooperative and discipline of school is according to a standard of high school. . However one father stated that it should be improved. All the parents are satisfied with the performance of their children. All the parents replied that homework is assigned and checked daily. Moreover they told that their children understand easily but some time they need help for more clarification and they have to join academy or tuition center.

XII. OPINION OF PARENTS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS STUDENTS

All the parents of private schools students told that they are quite satisfied with the performance of their children. They also told that the homework is assign and checked daily by the teachers. They also satisfied with the teaching learning environment and management of school. They were also satisfied with the cleanliness at school. They can easily contact teachers and can easily approach to principal when it is required.

XIII. FINDINGS

Public Schools

- ☐ Public schools have large, spacious and according to standard school buildings.
- ☐ Teachers are permanent, highly qualified and trained. All facilities including building, hall, library, furniture and utilities like electricity, water supply, and gas etc are provided and financed by government.
- ☐ Education is totally free up to matriculation level. Public schools enroll the majority of students belonging to middle and lower middle class families. Education is better at secondary level than private schools.
- ☐ Public schools have larger class size.
- ☐ Maximum public schools heads had people- oriented/ democratic leadership styles. They plan and implement the department policies and monitor the school functions.

Private Schools

- ☐ Private schools do not have large spacious buildings with small classrooms.
- ☐ Private schools have less qualified or untrained teachers.
- ☐ Teachers pay individual attention to students.
- ☐ Homework is assigned and checked regularly. Selected study is done ill private schools and short notes are given to students.
- ☐ Students become more dependent and careless because of more attention of teacher.
- ☐ Private schools are profit-earning institutions; SO these provide :education t or those who have sound financial position.
- ☐ Private schools have reasonable class size small.
- ☐ Maximum private school heads had task-oriented/authoritative leadership style having all decision-making powers in schools

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